

May 21, 2009

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MEDIA CONTACT: Joanne Todd
360. 902.3553
206.910.7601 (cell)
joannet@dis.wa.gov

TREE PRESERVATION TO BEGIN ON WHEELER CONSTRUCTION SITE

Preserves Neighborhood Continuity While Saving Costs

OLYMPIA, WA - Most major building construction begins with bulldozers scraping the site down to bare earth, often knocking down healthy trees that had the misfortune to simply be in the way. With groundbreaking quickly approaching, Wright Runstad, developer of the state's new Data Center and office for the Department of Information Services, has a different plan.

Looking at the site, they identified several mature red and pin oak trees that would add beauty to the site and continuity to the surrounding neighborhood once the project is finished.

"This is a huge opportunity," noted Cindy Edens of Wright Runstad. "Mature trees like these are impossible to find and place on a site. This gives the landscaping much greater depth with the combination of new and mature trees."

Wright Runstad contacted a specialist who will bring in equipment to carefully uproot the trees and preserve them for planting when the buildings are complete in 2011.

Not all trees on the lot can be preserved, however. A stand of fir trees along the site's northern edge will be removed to make way for utility trenching. Developers saw an opportunity to make significant use of the fir trees as part of the preservation project. The oaks need to be placed in large boxes constructed from green wood. Upon removal, the fir trees will be milled, built into large boxes, and brought back to Olympia to hold the oaks for replanting on the site in 2011. Removal of the fir trees will begin on Tuesday, May 26.

Preserving the oaks is an environmentally positive action that will earn additional LEED's standard credit for the project as well as saving considerable landscaping costs for the project.

"It's a win-win, and the right thing to do," said Edens.

##